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## BOOK REVIEWS

FOODS OF THE FOREIGN-BORN IN RELATION TO HEALTH. Bertha M. Wood. Whitcomb and Barrows. Boston. Price \$1.25.

Every public health nurse, physician, and social worker, who deals with newcomers from Europe, must meet at every turn, problems of diet. Sometimes the problem is an economic one, when the income of the family is inadequate; sometimes the problem is social, involving on the part of the newcomers an inability to find in American markets their accustomed foodstuffs; sometimes the problem is a medical one, involving the treatment of diseased conditions, such as tuberculosis, malnutrition, constipation, etc. In every case the adviser of the foreign-born must understand the patient's food habits, tastes and prejudices. Only with such an understanding can the nurse or social worker interpret the accustomed foreign dietaries in terms of foods which can be secured in American markets.

The amount of practical information which Miss Wood has managed to compress into this slender volume of one hundred pages is amazing and is made possible only by her compact style and her economy of words. This quality alone will endear the book to the busy professional workers. Each of its brief chapters gives an account of the dietary background of an important racial group in this country, explaining the conditions and dietary habits of the people in their native land and indicating their food problems here, with special reference to health. Diseases in which diet is a factor are referred to, and diets and recipes for these

diseases are given for each nationality. In suggesting adaptations of the foreign diets to American conditions, Miss Wood's point of view is refreshingly human and understanding. We have here no mere test-tube dietitian. The author of this booklet has studied people as well as foods. She realizes that the new immigrants are "just folks" exactly as the earlier immigrants were "just folks," and with a broad understanding of people and prejudices she meets her problem. "In our hospitals and dispensaries we usually find only American foods prescribed for diets." We often hear it said that foreigners should learn to eat American foods, since they are to live in this country. Miss Wood, the author of this booklet, says, however, "Our milk soups are nutritious, but so are theirs; why not learn what they are and prescribe them? The same is true of other foods. If we study their customs and acquaint ourselves more and more with their foods, we shall not only broaden our own diet by the introduction of new and interesting dishes, but we shall be better able to help these foreign-born to adjust themselves to their new conditions."

Not only the professional, medical and social worker, but the housewife who is interested in cookery as a fine art, will wish to possess a copy of this book. The reviewer personally was delighted to find, for instance, that "Zabaione," that most delectable of the Italian *a la carte*, is as simple to make as it is delicious and nutritious.

SALLY LUCAS JEAN

*Director Child Health Organization of America.*